

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO /SECSTATE WASHDC 5597

INFO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, CI, PE

SUBJECT: CHILE-PERU RIVALRIES: GOP JAILS SPORTSWRITER FOR PROVE-
CATIVE ARTICLE

1. ON JUNE 14 POLICE ARRESTED "LA PRENSA SPORTSWRITER DIEGO GARCIA VENEGAS FOR COMMITTING AN "OFFENSE AGAINST THE NATION AND ITS ARMED INSITUCTIONS."

2. GARCIA'S ARREST STEMS FROM RECENT ARTICLE HE WROTE COMPARING A PERUVIAN FOOTBALL CLUB'S DEFEAT BY A CHILEAN CLUB TO PERU'S DEFEAT BY CHILE IN THE WAR OF THE PACIFIC. THE ARTICLE, ENTITLED "KNOWING HOW TO WIN AND HOW TO LOSE, " BEGINGS BY SAYING, "THE CHILEANS ONCE AGAIN OCCUPIED LIMA." IT INCLUDES COMMENTS LIKE, "IN THIS FOOTBAL WAR OF THE PACIFIC, THE CHILEANS HAVE WON AGAIN," AND ". . .THIS MATTER OF LOSING TO THE CHILEANS HAS BECOME A HABIT." THE ARTICLE STATES THAT THE CHILEANS WOM BECAUSE THEY HAVE A DECISIVE ATTITUDE WHICH ENABLES THEM TO ACHIEVE THEIR ENDS, ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY CONFRONT PERUVIAN. IT CONCLUDES, "THAT IS WHY WE LOSE AND WILL ALWAYS LOSE."

3. THE CASE IS NOW TO BE DECIDED BY AMILITARY COURT. IN AN EFFORT TO WIN HIS FREEDOM, GARCIA HAS WRITTEN AN OPEN LETTER TO PRESIDENT VELASCO, EMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES, AND
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ALL PERUVIANS APOLOGIZING FOR THE TONE OF THE ARTICLE AND

CLAIMING THAT, AS A MILITANT OF THE REVOLUTION, HE NEVER INTENDED
TO HARM HIS COUNTRY.

4. COMMENT: GARCIA'S PUBLIC APOLOGY MAY ENABLE THE GOP
TO QUIETLY DROP THE CHARGES. OTHERWISE, PERU WILL LOOK
REDICULOUS AS IT PROSECUTES A FOOLISH SPORTSWRITER.
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